NAQCC News

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1. SPRINT: Our sprint is this Wednesday evening, Mar. 19th at 8:30-10:30 PM EDT (Thursday 0030-0230Z).

This month it's our annual indoor antenna special award but with a little twist. This year K3WWP will not compete for the SA since he has never yet been beaten by anyone else using an indoor antenna. So if he wins again, the SA goes to the second highest indoor antenna scorer.

Let's keep up the great participation. We are averaging over 50 logs submitted for our last several sprints despite a slowdown in February when our sprint was plagued with just about the worst propagation imaginable. Even so, we received 42 logs. You folks are great!

There are the usual prizes and certificates topped off by our monthly giveaway of the CW books on CD donated by Chuck K7QO. Chuck is currently giving away one CD to the high scorer who hasn't won a CD before. Club officers are not eligible.

When the sprint is over, please submit your results and log via our autologger. It has speeded up reporting of results so much we are considering changing our log submission deadline by shortening it by a couple days or so. Last month all logs were here almost 3 days before the deadline.

If you're entering one of our sprints for the first time, we welcome you and hope you will be a regular participant from now on. Last month we welcomed W7QQQ, K1ULF, KD8GZ, KC0VKN, KE7LKW, KU4A, AJ9ON, and VE3VVF as first time participants and/or log submitters.

Remember this is only a brief overview of the coming sprint. Be sure to read and understand the full general sprint rules and any specific rules for this month's sprint here.

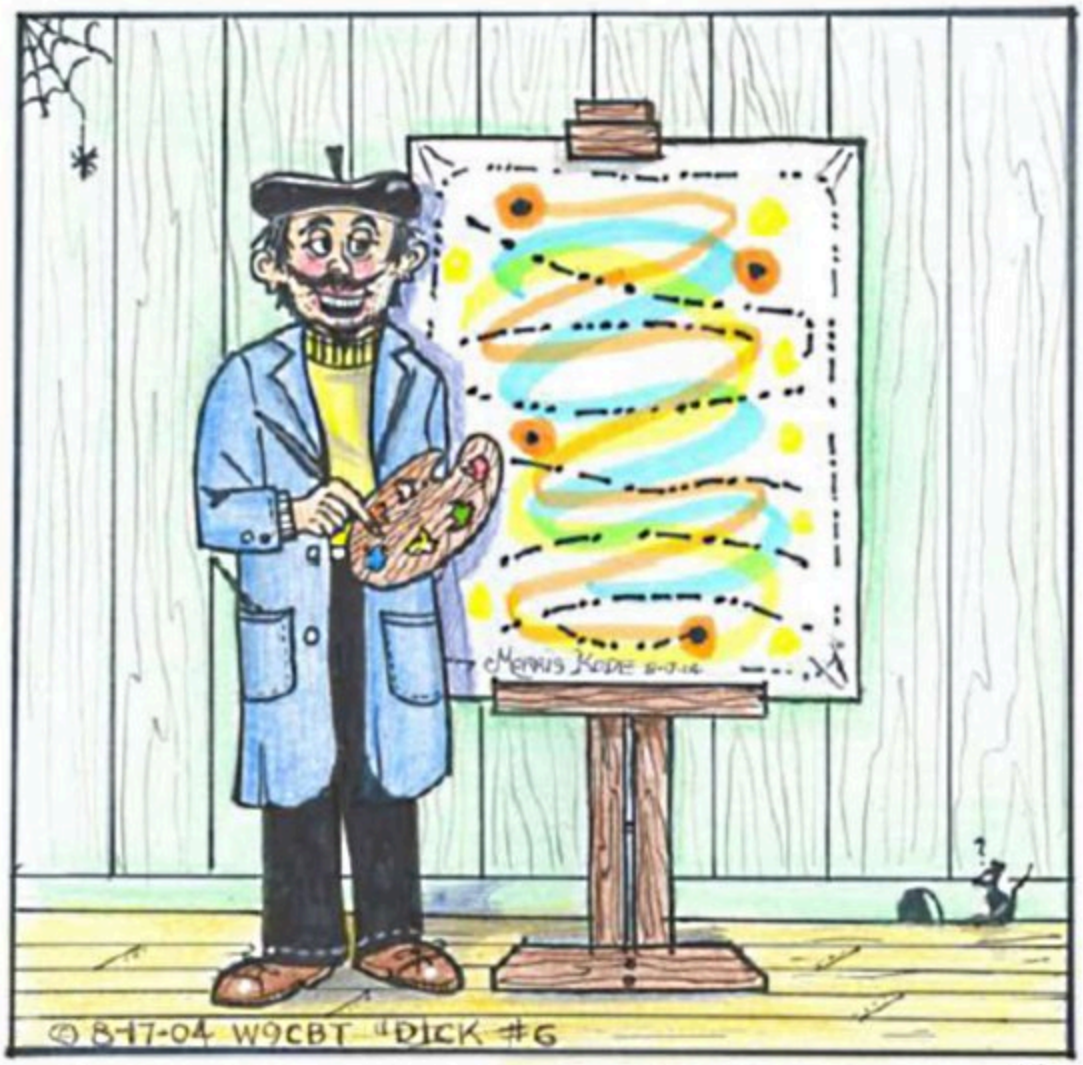
2. FEBRUARY CHALLENGE RESULTS: The groundhog challenge turned out to be quite popular. We received 11 entries with 8 of those able to complete all 6 of the little weather predictors' names. K3WWP and NU7T topped the list of the number of stations used to make the names with 73 and 66 respectively. Of the 3 who didn't make all the names, it was just a matter of a couple letters holding them back. I think if you read the soapbox comments for the challenge you'll get an idea of how much fun these alphabet challenges are becoming with our members.

The winner of the bug/paddle handles (donated by Gregg WB8LZG) drawing was KB4QQJ. You can see examples of the handles on Gregg's web site.

Full challenge info including my tutorial/work sheet for our alphabet style challenges here.

3. GENERAL CLUB NEWS: - There's not a whole lot of news right now, but one item is a big one. We've been promising some sort of CW Elmering Project almost from the inception of the club, and it is finally nearing fruition under the guidance of Ron K5DUZ and Karl N3IJR. It will supplement and expand on the current CW Operating Tips section of the club web site. I think this is really exciting and will be a big help to those of our members who are new to CW, and will probably even help out some veteran CW ops on a point here or there as well. CW has always been a properly structured form of communication, but with the demise of CW testing and support of CW by organizations like the ARRL, operating procedures have deteriorated over the past few years. We hope the CW Elmer Project will address this matter in addition to helping folks learn CW. It's just a wide open field, and I know both Ron and Karl have very strong feelings about proper CW learning and operating.

4. CW CARTOON OF THE MONTH: Let's take a comedy break now courtesy of Dick Sylvan W9CBT. Dick has been a long-time QRP/CW operator. One of his many talents is being a cartoon artist, and he is supplying a cartoon each month for the newsletter. The NAQCC is very honored to become the third organization to feature Dick's cartoons in their publications. Dick's cartoons appear monthly in The K9YA Telegraph, an on-line only Ham Radio E-zine and also in RadCom Magazine, the British Ham Radio publication. Dick has also authored a book entitled "Hi Hi - A Collection of Ham Radio Cartoons" available via his web site at http://www.k9ya.org/w9cbt/. A new cartoon will be appearing in each of our even-numbered newsletters.



"THE SKILL OF TELEGRAPHY IS AN ART!"

5. MEMBER NEWS: A couple of you responded to my urging that you shed your humility and send in some news about what you've been doing with QRP/CW. Thanks for that, but we need still more news for this section. Finding out what other members are doing in a club is very important. That can only be done if you let us know what you are doing, so.....

Send your news items to our news editor Paul KD2MX at **KD2MX@ARRL.NET**.

- **From John AJ9ON #1809 -** I'd like to let everyone know I'm doing a mini-DXpedition from March 23 to March 28 on Fripp Island, SC (IOTA NA-110,4-land) operating CW on or around 7.040MHz and 10.116MHz. I'll QSL every contact and welcome reception reports from anyone listening. I'll be using simple dipole antennas and power levels around 1W. I don't have an operating schedule but will try to work everyday in the morning and evenings and sporadically in the afternoon as time permits. I'll write something up for the next newsletter to let you all know my experiences. I hope to work you, John, AJ9ON

- **From Tim KD8GZ #1262 -** It amazes me how working QRP really hones a person's listening skills. I'm still working to improve my code copying and sending abilities while trying to learn to copy code "in my head".

Even though I'm not a new ham (licensed in early 1982), I was away from the hobby from late 1985 until June of 2005. So, I find it's almost like I'm still starting all over! Since I've been back, I'm 100% CW with an old Speed-X straight key and loving it. In June of 2005, without any ham equipment, I bought a new Icom IC-718 (I went "cheap" in case my return to ham radio might not last long). What a great rig! Any way...CW and QRP is so much fun, I can't believe it! Far, far, far more fun than SSB was for me back in the 80's.

I would love to do some portable operating from the park once our Ohio winter weather moves out. I'd also like to acquire one of those little, battery-operated Sierra, or Rockmite, or AT-S 40M transceivers. I'm no kit builder, it is not my skillset, so I need a rig that does not need a lot of repairs.

My challenge is that I have zero experience with QRP-portable operation. So I would like to hook up with a ham somewhere as a mentor. Communicating via e-mails would be fine but it would be ideal if the person was within a couple hours of my home for a possible visit...south of Cleveland, Ohio. Anybody out there who could please give me some suggestions? Thanks. e-mail: www.kd8gz@hotmail.com. 72's, Tim Davisson, KD8GZ

- **From Randy KB4QQJ #1809 -** An INVITATION to Newcomer's and Old-Timer's alike!!! I am running a series of QSO parties this spring and summer and all are invited to attend.

Starting Friday 14-Mar-2008 at 00:00 UTC (8:00 PM Thursday EST)

THIS IS NOT A CONTEST. THIS IS JUST AN INVITATION FOR FUN AND OPPORTUNITY.

On the second Friday UTC each month through the summer, I will be operating from hilltops, parks, my favorite fishing pond or home.

There will be no scores, no prizes or logs to submit. Just accept my invitation to join me in 24 hours of fun and the opportunity to join other QRP'ers in making QRP 1x or 2x contacts. So please, grab your QRP rigs, kits or homebrew cans and lets have a party!!!.

If you are working on an NAQCC, FISTS, or SKCC award I can exchange numbers with you. I will be operating 500 mw to 5 watts output using a straight key or bug and simple wire antennas. Frequencies will be set around the NAQCC and SKCC frequencies. I will be posting freqs via QRP-L and on the SKCC sked page.

The first party will be on an island at Mackintosh Lake in Burlington, NC - Alamance County, Grid FM06. See you there!

- **From John K3WWP #0002** - A brief note on Randy's news item above. It is not necessary to exchange NAQCC numbers for our awards. We trust you to know you worked a member without having to exchange numbers. Also the NAQCC does not have regular operating frequencies since we want our members to spread out all over the bands to preach the gospel of CW to all hams, not just stick to one frequency and work the same club members over and over again. But in special cases like this, we would suggest the same frequencies as for our NAQCC sprints which are the standard long-standing QRP frequencies.

As those of you know who read my web site diary regularly, I've been having problems with a very stubborn kidney stone. That has limited my operating time even more than it has been lately. The problem started the weekend of the ARRL DX Test. I had been planning a big effort in that one, but that didn't happen and I only got a few QSO's. However despite the problems, my streak has continued unabated, and on April 12th if nothing happens before then, I will make a QSO (hopefully many QSO's) using CW, QRP, and simple wire antennas for the

5,000th consecutive day. When I started the streak at the urging of Eric KB3BFQ, I had no idea it would continue for so long. I think more so than anything else imaginable, the streak shows the effectiveness and efficiency of our wonderful mode - Morse Code. After all, the streak has continued through the doldrums of two sunspot minimums, as well as the highs of a sunspot maximum. Ironically, a couple of days during or near the maximum proved the most difficult in getting my daily QSO with some intense geomagnetic storms, but nevertheless I made it. I don't honestly know if such a streak could be possible with any other ham radio mode at QRP levels and using simple wire antennas. Oh and I should mention, I never used a pre-arranged QSO (sked, net check-in, etc.) to maintain the streak. All QSO's came at random either answering a CQ, someone answering my CQ, or in a sprint or contest.

The publication of our next newsletter will be announced via email to all members for whom we have a valid email address unless they specifically have unsubscribed from the email.

Unless otherwise credited, all items are written by K3WWP.

If you came directly to this newsletter, we invite you now to browse the NAQCC Web Site.